

## STEAM RAILROAD IN YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK.

AUGUST 7, 1894.—Laid on the table and ordered to be printed.

Mr. HARE, from the Committee on the Public Lands, submitted the following

### ADVERSE REPORT:

[To accompany H. R. 5066.]

The Committee on the Public Lands, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 5066) to encourage and establish better facilities for travel to, from, into, and through the Yellowstone National Park, and for other purposes, have had the same under consideration and report the same back with the recommendation that it do not pass.

The committee make the annexed Department reports a part of this report.

#### DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, *Washington, March 8, 1894.*

SIR: Your letter of the 11th of January, 1894, has been received, inclosing a copy of H. R. bill 5066, "To encourage and establish better facilities for travel to, from, into, and through the Yellowstone National Park and for other purposes," Fifty-third Congress, second session, with the request for an opinion as to the propriety of its passage.

In response thereto I have the honor to transmit herewith a copy of the report of the acting superintendent of the Yellowstone National Park, to whom the matter was referred, setting forth his objections to the passage of the bill, also a copy of a communication from him dated the 3d ultimo, replying to the argument in support of the bill, made by H. A. Coffeen before your committee, and have to state that I concur in the opinion expressed by the acting superintendent of the park, that the bill should not become a law.

In this connection it is proper to state that a bill somewhat similar to the one under consideration, to wit, Senate bill No. 980, was referred to this Department in April of 1886 by the Senate Committee on Territories, for an expression of the views of the Secretary thereon. On the 26th of April, 1886, report thereon was made, copy of which is herewith transmitted, setting forth in detail the reasons why railroads should not be permitted to enter the Yellowstone Park reservation, which sets forth the views of the Department on this question at this time.

Very respectfully,

WM. H. SIMS,  
*Acting Secretary.*

Hon. THOMAS C. MCRAE,  
*Chairman Committee on the Public Lands, House of Representatives.*

#### DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK, *Mammoth Hot Springs, Wyo., January 22, 1894.*

SIR: I return herewith "A bill (H. R. 5066) to encourage and establish better facilities for travel to, from, into, and through the Yellowstone National Park, and for other purposes," with the following report:

There is no use for such a railroad at present, nor will there be for years to come. As far as travel *into* the park is concerned, the 4,000 passengers per year are well enough transported at present. Of course a connection with the lines of railroad to the east or to the south of the park is very desirable, but the demands of this bill are entirely too much to grant in return for the few benefits.

The road would pass through one of the most thickly timbered parts of the park, and no power on earth could protect the park from total ruin by fire in case it should be built.

Should this charter be granted others could not be refused, and ruin total and absolute would result.

I believe this to be the most mischievous bill ever introduced in regard to the park, and I urgently recommend that it receive your strenuous objection.

Yours, very respectfully,

GEO. S. ANDERSON,  
- Captain, Sixth Cavalry,

*Acting Superintendent Yellowstone National Park.*

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK,  
*Mammoth Hot Springs, Wyo., February 3, 1894.*

SIR: Since my letter of 22d ultimo, reporting upon H. R. 5066, the inclosed argument of Mr. Coffeen in support of his bill has come to me, and I wish to call your attention to certain points therein. The Mr. Gillette who signs the two articles submitted by Mr. Coffeen is a surveyor in the employ of the Burlington route. This makes it certain that the bill is in the interest of that road, although that fact is not stated in the act. The statement that the park contains the only practicable route for a railroad between the Northern Pacific and the Union Pacific, a distance of 250 miles, is hardly correct. A very good route has been surveyed through Cook, via Clarks Fork, passing just to the north of the park, and an available route to the south of the park, via Buffalo Fork, and crossing the Teton range in the valley of Snake River. These two routes are not more than 90 or 100 miles apart.

All that is said about the game is simply not true. The game *does* exist here in great numbers, because it is protected, but it is *not* fed. It simply moves to the more open valleys during the winter. Two of these valleys would be cut by the railroad should it go through the park by the route indicated, and then the destruction of the elk and buffalo would *surely* result.

The snow lies so deep about the lake, owing to the amount of moisture in that vicinity, that the road will be kept open during the winter with the utmost difficulty, if at all. I do not believe the projectors thoroughly appreciate this fact. The precipitation there is far greater than in any other part of the West with which I am acquainted. It is certain that the deep snow and low temperature will keep tourists from resorting to the park in the winter, and no more accommodation will be afforded than is at present.

After a residence of three years in the park I feel qualified to assert that a railroad built on the line called for in this bill would result in the ruin of the park and its complete destruction as a forest or a game preserve.

There is hardly a sentence in Mr. Coffeen's argument that is not capable of refutation by anyone cognizant of the condition of affairs in and about the park. I trust the bill will receive your earnest and active opposition.

The Burlington route can easily make its western exit without ruining this magnificent park by its tracks.

Yours, very respectfully,

GEO. S. ANDERSON,

*Captain, Sixth Cavalry, Acting Superintendent Yellowstone National Park.*

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
*Washington, April 22, 1886.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 3d instant, inclosing Senate bill 980, and report No. 204, in relation to "granting the right of way to the Cinnabar and Clark's Fork Railroad Company" through Yellowstone Park reservation, with request that this Department will furnish for the use of the Committee on Territories all of the data and information in its posses-

sion. The delay in responding is explained by the inclosed documents, which were obtained mainly through correspondence incident to your inquiry.

The park, as you are aware, was established by act of Congress, March 1, 1872, and in the language of that enactment (sec. 2474, R. S.) "*dedicated and set apart as a public park or pleasure ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people; and all persons who locate or settle upon, or occupy any part of the land thus set apart as a public park, except as provided in the following section, shall be considered trespassers and removed therefrom.*"

"SEC. 2475. Such public park shall be under the exclusive control of the Secretary of the Interior, whose duty it shall be, as soon as practicable, to make and publish such regulations as he may deem necessary or proper for the care and management of the same. Such regulations shall provide for the preservation from injury or spoliation of all timber, mineral deposits, natural curiosities, or wonders within the park and their retention in their natural condition. The Secretary may, in his discretion, grant leases for building purposes, for terms not exceeding ten years, of small parcels of ground, at such places in the park as may require the erection of buildings for the accommodation of visitors \* \* \* he shall provide against the wanton destruction of the fish and game found within the park \* \* \* he shall cause all trespassers upon the same to be removed therefrom, and, generally, is authorized to take all such measures as may be necessary or proper to fully carry out the objects and purposes of this section."

In the second session of the Forty-seventh Congress (see p. 626, vol. 22, Stat. L.) the following legislation looking to the preservation of the park in its "natural state" was had: \* \* \* "Two thousand dollars to be paid annually to a superintendent of said park, and not exceeding nine hundred dollars annually to each of ten assistants, all of whom shall be appointed by the Secretary of the Interior, and reside continuously in the park, and whose duty it shall be to protect the game, timber, and objects of interest therein; the balance of the sum appropriated (forty thousand dollars was the total amount) to be expended in the construction and improvement of suitable roads and bridges within said park, under the supervision and direction of an engineer officer detailed by the Secretary of War for that purpose.

"The Secretary of the Interior shall lease small portions of ground in the park, not exceeding ten acres in extent for each tract, on which may be erected hotels and the necessary outbuildings, and for a period not exceeding ten years; but such lease shall not include any of the geysers or other objects of curiosity or interest in said park, or exclude the public from the free and convenient approach thereto; or include any ground within a quarter of a mile of any of the geysers, or the Yellowstone Falls; nor shall there be leased more than ten acres to any person or corporation; nor shall any hotel or other building be erected within the park until such lease shall be executed by the Secretary of the Interior; and all contracts, agreements, or exclusive privileges heretofore made or given in regard to said park or any part thereof are hereby declared to be invalid; nor shall the Secretary of the Interior, in any lease which he may make and execute, grant any exclusive privileges within said park, except upon the ground leased.

"The Secretary of War, upon the request of the Secretary of the Interior, is hereby authorized and directed to make the necessary detail of troops to prevent trespassers or intruders from entering the park for the purpose of destroying the game or objects of curiosity therein, or for any other purpose prohibited by law, and to remove such persons from the park if found therein."

A similar appropriation was made by the Forty-eighth Congress, second session (see Stat. L., vol. 23, p. 499): "For every purpose and object necessary for the protection, preservation, and improvement of the Yellowstone National Park."

I quote the statutes in this connection to show the spirit of the legislation had in regard to the park, and that the dominant idea in Congress in reference to the matter has been the preservation of the wilderness of forests, geysers, mountains, etc., so to speak, and the game common to that region, in as nearly the condition in which we found them as possible, with a view to holding for the benefit of those who shall come after us something of the original "Wild West" that shall stand while the rest of the world moves, affording to the student of nature and the pleasure tourist a restful contrast to the busy and progressive scenes that the story of the past of American enterprise gives assurance will ere long be repeated in the growth in population and civilizing influences of the Territories of Idaho, Wyoming, and Montana, that now border on the park, and that even now are aspiring to the dignity of statehood.

The data of surveys in this park and the region immediately north of it is too meager to enable this Department to answer with any degree of positiveness your inquiry as to whether there is any other practicable route for the proposed road except the one comprehended in the provisions of the bill in question, but I would respectfully suggest in this connection that the line proposed by the Cinnabar and



Clarks Fork Railroad Company is a creature of the draftsman rather than of the engineer, and is not, so far as I can ascertain, a deduction from instrumental survey, supported by notes of topography and levels, and estimates of excavation, fill, and grade.

Several other routes are suggested by military and scientific authorities of high repute, whose letters and reports upon the subject I send you as practicable and feasible, and though these lines have not been subjected to the test of instrumental scrutiny, they are at least as familiar to engineers, geologists, and border hunters as the one seeking recognition in Senate bill 980, and while longer and perhaps more expensive in the demands of construction, I do not think that that question should have consideration in view of the aims and objects of Congress in the legislation of 1872 and subsequent years, and the hopes engendered in the hearts of the lovers of science and nature by that legislation, that at least "one brand should be saved from the burning" of a restless civilization, before whose relentless advance the forests, plains, and even the mountains in their wild aspect are disappearing, particularly, when, for the purpose of this legacy to posterity, a reservation was made of rugged rocks, bitter waters, inaccessible forests, boiling fountains, arid plains, and on the whole a region that but for its selection by the Government, for the people of to-day and the future, would have been rejected by all men and corporations animated by thirst for gain or the selfish frenzy of speculation.

The Lieutenant-General Commanding the Army, in a communication that I inclose, says:

"The railroad from Cinnabar to Cook City, following the route proposed, will traverse about forty-five miles of the park and be at the road's most southern point, the junction of Soda Butte Creek with the East Fork, about *twelve miles south of the north line of the park*. Except near the Mammoth Hot Springs, the road will not pass in the immediate vicinity of any of the objects of public interest, but it would pass through *some of the best grazing and meadow lands in its northwestern corner*."

The general, in the above frank recital, gives some good reasons for the company's anxiety to secure a line through the park, and excellent reasons in my opinion for rejecting the application. The fact of the line penetrating 12 miles south of the northern border, its passing in the vicinity of the Mammoth Hot Springs, and its virtual capture of some of the best grazing and meadow lands, are all strong arguments against the granting of its application, if the theory that suggested the reservation still holds good and comprehends the maintenance of its original and present characteristics.

The conclusion of Gen. Sheridan's letter shows that he also holds this opinion, for he says:

"A railroad through any portion of the park is, however, not in harmony with the objects for which this reservation was created, and if permitted in this case will, I much fear, be used as a precedent by the advocates of the various other roads already projected through different sections.

"Under the present circumstances the objects of the park are being well fulfilled. The game is collecting in large numbers and, if not disturbed, will probably continue to do so in the future. These conditions should then, as far as possible, be maintained.

"With reference to other lines of communication that by Boulder Creek may prove possible. This route was traversed by an officer of the Army in 1878, who then reported that he deemed a railroad by this route practicable."

Lieut. Daniel C. Kingman, first lieutenant of engineers, U. S. Army, in charge of preparing roadways, bridges, and Government improvements generally at Yellowstone National Park, in a letter under date of March 25, replying to a communication from the editor of Forest and Stream, expresses surprise that his report of 1883 "should be quoted as in any way favoring the construction of railroads for any purpose whatever within the Yellowstone Park."

"I have," he says, "*always been opposed to the construction of railroads in the park*. I have given this subject the most careful thought and study, and I should regard their introduction as the most serious injury that could be inflicted on the park, and the construction of the Cinnabar and Clarks Fork Railroad would be especially deplorable, because it seems so unnecessary.

"There is every reason to believe that the route of the Stillwater (lying wholly outside of the park) is a better one for a railroad to the mines than that via the Yellowstone River and Soda Butte Creek."

Mr. Arnold Hague, geologist of the U. S. Geological Survey, in charge of the national park division, responding to a letter from this office covering the inquiries submitted by your committee, under date of April 6 says:

"The Clarks Fork mining district lies just outside the northeast corner of the park, high up in the mountains near the headwaters of the Stillwater and Clarks Fork rivers and Soda Butte Creek.

"The district, as yet, is small and undeveloped. It may have a brilliant future

before it, but it has not been satisfactorily demonstrated. Every mining engineer knows that the number of mining locations held has very little to do with the importance of a district. I first visited it in the autumn of 1883; I again visited it in September, 1885, and found that the mining developments had progressed far less than I had been led to suppose. So far as I was able to judge upon careful inquiry I think there were not more than a hundred miners actively employed in the district, and most of these were doing what is known as prospecting work. In no one mine were more than three or four men at work. Considerable ore has been taken out, but mostly of a very low grade, that will have to be smelted in the district. From present developments I fail to see how this district could support a railway.

*"No careful surveys for railway routes have as yet been made, although much misinformation has been scattered broadcast about the impracticability of reaching the district in any other way than through the park."*

"Three routes, however, have been proposed—one by way of Stillwater River, from Stillwater on the Northern Pacific Railroad; one from Billings, Mont., by way of Clarks Fork, and one by Soda Butte and the Third Canyon of the Yellowstone River, passing through the Yellowstone Park for about 50 miles, nearly the entire length of the road.

"It has been stated that the mines are all on Soda Butte Creek, and to reach them a railway from north or east would have to cross a high mountain range. This I consider an error. Although Cooke City is situated on Soda Butte Creek, it is only a small settlement, and *inconveniently located for nearly all the recent mining developments of the district*. All the more important recent developments are situated either on the opposite side of the watershed—on streams tributary to the Stillwater and Clarks Fork—or else within a few hundred feet of the summit of the range.

"With a railway a mining town would be equally as well situated on either the Stillwater or Clarks Fork.

"From all I can learn, I am inclined to believe that the route following the valley of the Stillwater will prove practicable. I have not examined it personally, *but more accurate surveys have been made of it than of the other lines*. I am told that it is feasible to build the road to within 15 miles of Cooke City. All the newest mining locations are from 3 to 6 miles from Cooke City, high up in the mountains. This road would be about 54 miles in length. Stillwater, the junction of the branch with the Union Pacific Railroad, is about 125 miles nearer St. Paul than Cinnabar.

"I have personally examined the Clarks Fork Valley, 40 miles east of Cooke City, and I am of the opinion that if the mining interests demand a railway a road could be built from the mines to Billings, Mont., *which would be far more serviceable than a road through the park*. There is on this route one very rugged place known as Clarks Fork Canyon, a deep gorge 6 miles in length, but I am told it is quite possible to avoid it.

"This route seems so feasible *that accurate surveys should be made* before granting a right of way through the park. I am well acquainted with the country through which the railroad would have to pass going from Cooke City to Cinnabar. My own work compelled me to study the Third Canyon carefully, and I have no hesitation in saying it would be a very costly matter to build the road for 18 or 20 miles from Gardiner to the East Fork of the Yellowstone River.

"It has been estimated by the friends of the Cinnabar and Cooke City Railroad that it can be built for \$1,000,000. It seems to me that if the output of the mines at Clarks Fork can stand such an expense, either of the other routes should be chosen.

"In my opinion many persons are interested in obtaining this right of way through the park who desire to use the road for the purpose of transporting passengers who visit the park in the summer. Having the only right of way granted by Congress they anticipate receiving large revenues from tourists. Upon its completion we should see glowing inducements held out to tourists of a ride through the Third Canyon of the Yellowstone and the charming valley of the East Fork.

"The granting of 100 or 200 feet on each side of the track would necessarily include Soda Butte Spring, the water of which is already much sought after by many people, and the only one in the park which has yet been found to possess curative properties.

"In my opinion, it would be a mistake to allow this spring to pass beyond Government control.

"I can not but believe the establishment of a railway in the park would prove permanent injury to the reservation and tend to subvert the purposes for which the park was originally set apart.

"The danger from forest fires would be very great, and *the large game would disappear*, as it has everywhere else, with the appearance of railways.

"With a railway in the park 50 miles in length, with stations every 7 miles, disagreements difficult of settlement would immediately arise between a powerful railway corporation and the management of the park.

"A railway means the settlement of large numbers of persons in the park, over



whom the Department of the Interior could have but little control. It would require constables, justices, and courts, and finally the people would ask for political privileges.

"It should be the aim of the Department to permit as few people as possible to reside permanently in the park, other than those engaged in the accommodation of visitors. A railway in the park is, in my opinion, the beginning of the end. The demands of others, claiming equal rights, would grow with years, and in time the park would have to be thrown open to settlement.

"By preserving the park intact for the next ten years it will take such a firm hold upon the country that the people will never consent to its desecration to purely personal ends.

"It belongs to Maine and Florida quite as much as to Wyoming and Montana, but in time these Territories will derive the greatest benefits."

Mr. W. H. Phillips, late special agent of this Department in the Yellowstone National Park, in his report (Senate Ex. Doc. No. 51, Forty-ninth Congress) says:

"Interested parties have for some years brought to bear a constant pressure upon Congress and the Department to induce action in favor of a railroad through the park. This railroad is sought ostensibly for the purpose of bringing to market the ore from Cooke City, a mining camp adjacent to the northeast boundary line of the park.

"Apart from the consideration that a railroad is not needed in the park, and that it would deface its beauty, is the further consideration that the preservation of the game and the forests would be unattainable should a railroad be allowed within the limits of the park."

Writing to the Department under date of April 6, 1886, Mr. Phillips says, referring to the project suggested by Senate bill 980:

"The road would run through one of the wildest portions of the reservation, within which the herd of buffalo, *sole remnant of the once mighty herds, now roams.*

"Nor need I dilate upon the damage of the forests which would result should the bill become a law. Owing to the dryness of the climate during most of the year forest fires are very easily caused, and, once started, do immense injury. A railroad would be the means of greatly increasing the danger to the forests from fires."

In the report of the House committee on expenditures for Indians and the Yellowstone Park to the present Congress it is said:

"The preservation of the forests which clothe with verdure the valleys, rugged declivities, and mountain peaks of the whole region is of special moment. It is made very clear by the practical and scientific views presented on this subject in the testimony that the regular flow of water in these regions is greatly dependent on these forests; it is, therefore, in the judgment of the committee, *of the highest moment that these forests should be protected from destruction either by fire or the axe.* To this extent, having in view at once the beauty of the park as a delightful resort of the people and the value of the great streams of water that issue from the mountains, as well as the benign influence of the forests on climate and health, this park should receive the special care of the Government."

In the communication from Mr. Phillips, of April 6, he refers as follows to the influence of a railroad in centering population in the park:

"\* \* \* If a railroad is allowed, the difficulties which the Department already labored under as to the management of the park will be greatly increased. It will be impossible to avoid more or less settlement along the line, and the introduction of a large number of people connected with the road. New rules and regulations will have to be made, and when made—with the present force under the superintendent—their enforcement will be very difficult, if not impossible.

"The objects contemplated by Congress have in a great measure been attained. Not only from all portions of this country, but from all portions of the world, the people have come to behold the wonders of nature contained in the park, and to seek escape from the trammels of civilized life surrounding them at home. The main wonder and joy to them has been to behold everything that was beautiful in the park in a state of nature; that the fair picture contained no blot of man's hand.

"By the bill under consideration all this is proposed to be changed. For the benefit of a private corporation the pleasure ground of the whole people is to be invaded, \* \* \* the face of nature is to be seared with a railroad, and one of the fairest portions of the park surrendered to a corporation for that purpose, upon which may be erected, in the language of the bill, 'station houses, depots, and machine shops.' This railroad will run 56 miles through the park, penetrating the wonderful canyons, cutting through the forests, and over the finest grass country in the park, and pursuing its course along the beautiful Yellowstone River.

"That a railroad would be destructive of the beauty of the park will be conceded by all. No less clear is it that the project is opposed to the main purpose for which the park was set apart. Already a railroad reaches the very gates of the park, and since it has reached that point they would have it penetrate within the 'sacred precincts.'"

Under date of April 10, 1886, Maj. J. W. Powell, Director of the U. S. Geological Survey, forwarded a communication to this Department, which I inclose herewith, replying to some of the inquiries suggested by your letter of the 3d instant. He also sends a map of a portion of the Yellowstone Park covering the location proposed in Senate bill 980, which I transmit for the information of the committee. The map "embraces an area extending across the park from east to west, from the northern boundary southward about 20 miles."

Maj. Powell discusses the various routes that have been suggested for a railroad to the Clarks Fork mining district, as follows:

#### THE YELLOWSTONE ROUTE.

"It starts at Gardiner, on the northern boundary of the park. The present terminus of the park branch of the Union Pacific Railroad is Cinnabar, about 3 miles from Gardiner. From Gardiner the line follows up the Yellowstone to the mouth of its East Fork, thence up this creek to where it passes into a district east of the park, in the neighborhood of the Clarks Fork mining district. The route thus traced through the park is about 46 miles. The extreme southerly point of the route, near the mouth of Soda Butte Creek, is a little more than 11 miles from the northern line of the park. The altitude of Gardiner is about 5,400 feet above the level of the sea; the altitude of a practicable site for the terminus of the road in the mining district would be about 7,500 feet; therefore the altitude to be gained in running from Gardiner to the terminus of the road would be 2,100 feet, and the length of the line would be from 50 to 55 miles. For 15 miles of its course the construction would be somewhat difficult and expensive from the fact that the road must run through a narrow and broken canyon. The remainder of the road would be of easy construction."

#### THE STILLWATER ROUTE.

"There is a possible route from Stillwater, a station on the Union Pacific Railroad, up Stillwater River to its head waters in the Clarks Fork mining district, but the terminus would not be the same as by the Yellowstone line, but on the other side of the 'divide.' This line would pass up a narrow valley, through a number of broken and difficult canyons. The length of the route would be from 65 to 70 miles. The altitude to be overcome in this distance would be about 3,930 feet."

#### THE CLARKS FORK ROUTE.

There is still another possible route by which this mining district may be reached, that extending from Billings up Clarks Fork, which stream heads in the mining district and gives it its name. The length would be from 125 to 130 miles. Along the route there are a number of canyons presenting obstacles to the road. One canyon especially is said to present great difficulties, and it may be necessary to run the line outside of the canyon along the mountain slopes in order to overcome this difficulty. The altitude to be overcome by this route is about 4,385 feet.

"There are some considerations in favor of this route from the fact that its terminus is farther east on the Northern Pacific Railroad, and from the further fact that along its course valuable *deposits of coal* are found."

Commenting upon the various routes, and reasoning from the meager engineering data at hand, Maj. Powell says:

"Altogether the Yellowstone Park route is shorter, can be constructed more cheaply per mile, has less elevation to overcome, and could be maintained and operated at much less expense than either of the other routes."

These conclusions would have force and weight if addressed by a chief engineer employed on preliminary survey to the board of directors of a company contemplating an economical investment in railroad construction between given points, but they are not entitled to consideration in this connection where but two questions, it seems to me, present themselves. First, the protection of the people's heritage, the park, from an intrusion that threatens its destruction, and, second, the furtherance of the interests of speculators, individual and corporate; and if I understand the object of the inquiry submitted by your honorable committee to this Department it is to ascertain the possibility of meeting the wishes of the railroad projectors, who have in view certain mining possibilities, or probabilities, without trenching upon the precincts of the park, heretofore so carefully hedged and guarded by Congress and this Department.

In this connection it seems to me we have no right to consider the questions of distance, grade, or cost, particularly as instanced here, where all are within rational and feasible bounds. Such surveys and data as we have—and the information is as



meager in regard to one route as another—demonstrate the practicability of connecting the Clarks Fork mining district with the Northern Pacific Railroad, without traversing by rail any portion of the park; and this being the case, it is not for the Department to make estimates of relative cost, or consider the matter of relative speed as dependent upon ease of grades, in an instance where speed is not a consideration and the grades are not excessive as compared with those of many mining and commercial lines in mountain countries, being about 56 feet to the mile on the "Stillwater route" and about 33 feet on the "Clarks Fork route," while it would average about 38 feet to the mile on the "Yellowstone Park route." It must be observed, also, that the distance for the park route is estimated as nearly as possible upon air-line assumptions, while in respect of the others, wide latitude is taken to cover deficits in information and exploration. Further, if we consider the fact that the park route extends for all its length, except about 15 miles, through a country where "the road would be of easy construction," and yet obtains in an estimated 55 miles an altitude of 2,100 feet, the inference of enormous grades to be accepted somewhere suggests itself.

In answer to your inquiry, transmitted through this office, as to the importance of the mining district in question, Maj. Powell says:

"No thorough information exists in this office relating to the importance of the mining region at Cooke City. It is known that mineral lodes have been discovered in this district of country and have been worked to some extent. None of the workings have been extended to great depths, but many small workings have been made and it is believed that much ore is now piled upon the ground. But the exploitation of the region seems not yet to be sufficient to warrant expression of opinion in relation to the ultimate extent of the mining industries that may be developed therein.

"The early discoveries were on the head of Soda Butte Creek; later discoveries are on the head of Stillwater and the head of Clarks Fork. The most important mine is the 'Great Republic,' which now has much low-grade ore on the dump pile. Cooke City is a small settlement at the center of the mining district. *If a railroad be built by any one of the routes, its terminus will probably be lower down and a new town will thus probably be established.*

"Gardiner is situated on the Yellowstone River, about 5 miles from the Mammoth Hot Springs, on the north line of the national park. It is a small settlement of log cabins and frame shanties. It derives its trade at present from the settlers living in the valley and from people visiting the park.

"Cinnabar, the present terminus of the park branch of the Northern Pacific Railroad, is about 3 miles away.

"With regard to the effect such a railroad would have upon the interests of the park the director does not feel that he is entitled to express an opinion."

It will be seen that the importance of the mining interests in this district are far from being demonstrated by any data in the possession of either the military or scientific authorities of the Government, and that doubt is expressed by both as to the ultimate importance of Cooke City as a mining town in the event of the most favorable outcome of the pending "prospectings;" but admitting its importance and future greatness, is it not possible that the researches of the near future may disclose like deposits of mineral wealth in the Territory of Idaho, immediately bordering on the west line of the park, and in Wyoming Territory, near its south and east lines, and will not the demands that now come up to Congress in behalf of the "Clarks Fork mining district" in Senate bill 980, if favorably considered, be annually echoed from other mineral districts with equal claim to recognition, until the park shall be—if equal justice be done to all petitioners—webbed with the arteries of intercourse and commerce, and cease to exist as the creature of the legislation of 1872, that "*dedicated and set apart as a public park and pleasure ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people*" this rugged, romantic, beautiful wilderness and wonderland?

In connection with other documents forwarded herewith, I send you a number of extracts from a representative journal of the American lovers of field sports and students of forestry, the Forest and Stream, to show the deep interest that is being taken in the question under discussion by an immense class of our most thoughtful and intelligent fellow-citizens, and the anxiety and suspicion with which they regard the overtures and representations of the corporations now besieging Congress for authority to penetrate the park with railroads.

In the event, however, that the judgment of your committee shall so far incline to the repeal, or amendment, of the legislation of 1872, and subsequent Congresses, as to favor the granting of the right of way proposed in Senate bill 980, I would respectfully suggest that the grant be restricted to such limits as are absolutely essential to roadbed, and slopes of "cuts" and bases of "fills," the measurement of which will be amply demonstrated when the "line of definite location" shall have been run and the office estimates based thereon shall have been made, if such estimates are submitted with the "plats of actual surveys" to this office for approval, in lieu of



the maximum width of 200 feet, "one hundred feet on each side of the center line of said railroad" asked in the bill.

The probability is that most of the work contemplated will be rock grading, and in such event, the cuts will be at a slope so light in the interest of economy, as to deflect little from the perpendicular, and, in rare instances, will require for road-bed and slopes a right of way more than 25 or 30 feet from center, while in the matter of "fills" trestlework and iron structures will be largely used, never requiring a greater breadth of base than 50 feet.

This amendment is suggested rather in the interest of timber preservation than economy of land, and with a view to guarding against that appearance of utter desolation usually incident to a forest right of way from which the timber has been cut or culled for a distance of 100 feet on either side.

If the grant is to be made upon the simple ground of affording an outlet for the products of the mines of the Clark's Fork district, there is no apparent necessity for stations at intervals more frequent than 10 miles, and I would respectfully suggest amendment in this particular; and that the grant of land at stations be limited to sites for depot buildings, wood or coal sheds, and water tanks; and that the limitation for side tracks or switches, shall not exceed a limit in width of 60 feet, to cover all trackways, and a length of 500 feet, in lieu of the maximum asked in the bill of 2,000 feet by 400 feet, or about 18 acres of the reservation in each instance; and that the structures erected by said railroad company within the park shall not, in any instance, include machine shops, repair shops, supply stations, hotels, restaurants, eating houses, stores, or any building except a depot, including telegraph or telephone office, residence for station agent, and one building for residence of section hands; and said right of way and location for depot grounds shall not, in any instance, include objects designated as natural curiosities or matters of interest to tourists, or be surrounded or inclosed by fences, walls, or hedges that shall obstruct the view of any contiguous objects, or bar the passage to them of pedestrians or vehicles.

If the purpose of the projectors of this enterprise is fully disclosed in bill 980, their object is not in any degree thwarted by acceptance of amendments suggested in the interest of the people and in furtherance of the views expressed so forcibly in the legislation creating the park. But the property grants asked for naturally excite distrust, as being those usually sought and accorded in the interest of local trade, progressive enterprise, and the aggregating of population—three conditions that antagonize the letter and spirit of the law establishing the reservation.

If "right of way" is to be granted, I respectfully suggest that it should be "right of way" plain and simple, and so circumscribed as to guard against peopling the park in the interest of personal or corporate gain or speculation; otherwise it will result at an early day in establishing a condition of affairs that may necessitate abandonment of the original theory of a national park, or such a contraction of territorial limits as will surrender to the "Cinnabar and Clark's Fork Railroad Company," and the other corporations in whose interest their bill practically blazes the way, all the lands and settlements in the reservation contiguous to their several lines.

The demand for grants at depots and sidings, of tracts 2,000 by 400 feet in extent, representing areas of 800,000 square feet, or more than 18 acres, in each instance, would, if conceded, enable the company to absorb and control every "oasis" of meadow land through which their line can be twisted or diverted; or cutting these tracts in center, or diagonally, practically possess a vastly larger number of acres than the grants comprehend by rendering the other portions of the valleys useless, because inaccessible to others. In fact, it is questionable whether any of the valleys of the park will be more than equal to the demand of a general right of way 200 feet in width and a right of way of switches of 400 feet in width.

The grant sought would include, and may be intended to include and absorb, the best meadow and grazing lands in the park referred to by Gen. Sheridan, Geologist Hague, and Special Agent Phillips, in the letters that accompany this report.

Very respectfully,

L. Q. C. LAMAR,  
Secretary.

HON. CHARLES F. MANDERSON,  
U. S. Senate.

H. Rep. 1386.—2

